

VZCZCXRO1385

RR RUEHCN RUEHDT RUEHHM

DE RUEHJA #0632 0970946

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

R 070946Z APR 09

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2064

INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS COLL

RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1028

RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC

RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA

RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 7883

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS JAKARTA 000632

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR EAP, OES

DEPT ALSO PASS TO HHS/ABHAT/MSTLOUIS AND HHS/NIH

NSC FOR HAROLD VARMUS AND CEQ

E.O. 12598: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [TSPL](#) [SENV](#) [KGHG](#) [PREL](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: U.S.-Indonesia: Moving Ahead with Health Collaboration

¶1. (SBU) During an April 6 meeting with Ambassador Hume, Dr. Emil Salim, Environmental Advisor to President Yudhoyono, urged that the United States and Indonesia expand health collaboration under a new bilateral science and technology agreement. Salim acknowledged that a stable bilateral relationship is essential for expanded collaboration on health, particularly tropical infectious diseases. He suggested that an umbrella S&T Agreement could be the first step to resolving the issue of the Naval Medical Research Unit-2 (NAMRU-2) in Jakarta.

¶2. (U) Climate change and its impact on the incidence of disease is yet another pressing reason, Salim noted, for a heightened focus on health. He emphasized that Indonesia, as a tropical and archipelagic country, is especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including on health. Jakarta therefore has a clear self-interest in advancing medical research on infectious diseases and concluding an umbrella science and technology (S&T) Agreement with the United States.

¶3. (SBU) A bilateral S&T Agreement, Salim said, could provide the basis for resolving the controversy over NAMRU-2 and its infectious diseases research. There is a misperception among some Indonesians about NAMRU-2's work, he noted, and the key is to eliminate their "suspicions." Salim recommended formally placing the work of NAMRU-2 under the Ministry of Research and Technology once we have a bilateral S&T Agreement. Doing so, Salim stated, would remove the political "burden" from the Ministry of Health. Packaging NAMRU-2's work as part of an overarching collaborative endeavor on scientific research under the Ministry of Research's responsibility, he suggested, could go a long way towards mitigating domestic sensitivities.

¶4. (SBU) Salim revealed that he has been thinking about the NAMRU-2 issue and discussing it with other Indonesians for some time. He also implied that President Yudhoyono is keen to enhance collaboration on health. Salim welcomed Ambassador Hume's suggestions on other ways to desensitize the issue, including creating a bi-national board for NAMRU-2 and collaborating to establish a center for health/medicine that would also conduct the clinical research on infectious diseases.

HUME